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the disputation there has been on the problem of free-will and necessity, this question has scarcely been enough discussed; but for a decision on it and the application of that decision to individual cases I cannot think that collective society will ever be competent.

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IS IMMORTALITY DESIRABLE? By G. Lowes Dickinson. (The Ingersoll Lecture, 1908.) Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1909. Pp. 63.

The author's main purpose in this lecture, as the title indicates, is to ask whether immortality, supposing it possible, is desirable, and to express his own opinion regarding the kind of immortality that one might rationally desire. At the opening of the lecture, and again at the close, however, he refers to the possibility of immortality, giving some general reasons why he considers it an open question whether or no it is a fact. "That the soul dies with the brain is an inference, and quite possibly a mistaken one. If to some minds it seems inevitable, that may be as much due to a defect of their imagination as to a superiority of their judgment. To infer wisely in such matters one must be a poet as well as a man of science" (p. 5). The spirit of Mr. Dickinson's discussion is, in general, indicated by this quotation. It is from the literary standpoint, and with frequent references to literature, that he deals with his topic, clothing his thoughts in the clear and charming prose that has delighted readers of his other books, and exhibiting everywhere sincerity and restraint in the expression of his opinions. These personal qualities are what give impressiveness to the lecture, and it is therefore not a little disconcerting to find the author turning at the end to 'psychical research' as a scientific means of deciding regarding survival after death, and adopting the familiar tone of censure against those who through prejudice and indifference are neglecting "a branch of scientific inquiry which may have results more important than any other that is being pursued in our time." To establish the fact of survival would not prove immortality, Mr. Dickinson admits; but he thinks that it would remove the principal objection against it. But would it tend to prove immortality desirable? On the

contrary, one cannot avoid the conclusion that if the "Reports" published in the Proceedings of the Society for Physical Research are to be accepted as science, the question of the desirability of immortality is decided in the negative. For surely the 'gibbering ghost' hypothesis of the psychical researchers belongs to the type of immortality which Mr. Dickinson would exclude as undesirable!

In discussing what kind of immortality is desirable, the author rejects 'eternal recurrence,' 'an immortality with hell,' and the positivistic conception of immortality. The conception of a continuation of an identical soul substance without any survival of consciousness—an hypothesis defended by Mr. McTaggart—does not seem to Mr. Dickinson so wholly unsatisfactory and unmeaning as it has to Mr. McTaggart's critics and as, I must confess, it does to me. An immortality which carried with it the continuance of self-consciousness would be, however, in Mr. Dickinson's opinion, much more desirable. For the development of the powers of the individual for good seems to require a continuity of experience analogous to that which we are aware of here; and it is only as rendering possible such a development that immortality is in the highest sense desirable and significant. "The whole strength of the case for immortality, as a thing to be desired, lies in the fact that no one in this life attains his ideal. . . . The conception that death ends all does not empty life of all its worth, but it destroys, in my judgment, its most precious element, that which transfigures all the rest; it obliterates the gleam on the snow, the planet in the east; it shuts off the great adventure, the adventure after death" (pp. 32, 33).

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STUDIES IN MYSTICAL RELIGION. By Rufus M. Jones, M. A., D. Litt. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1909. Pp. xxxviii, 518.

A comprehensive, critical, and sympathetic treatment of mysticism is greatly needed. The comparative study of religion has brought together a vast amount of material elucidating the character and development of man's religious life.